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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 BRUSSELS 001628

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR S/I, NEA/I AND EUR/ERA

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TAGS: [PREL](#), [EFIN](#), [IZ](#), [EUN](#), [USEU](#), [BRUSSELS](#)

SUBJECT: US-EU CONFERENCE ON IRAQ: VISIT OF S/I AMBASSADOR JONES TO BRUSSELS

Classified By: USEU POLOFF LEE LITZENBERGER; REASON 1.5 (B,D)

1. (C) Summary. On April 21, Senior Advisor and Coordinator for Iraq Policy Ambassador Richard Jones met with a wide range of EU officials from the Luxembourg Presidency, the Commission and the Council to consult on planning for the U.S.-EU co-hosted International Conference on Iraq in June. The U.S. and EU reached notional agreement to hold a one-day ministerial in June, preceded by senior officials discussion, and a small planning group dinner the day before. Consensus was reached to plan through a small group (U.S., EU, Iraq, Japan, Egypt and UN). The EU foresees 50-60 invitees; the U.S. view is more expansive, and the sides agreed to compare proposed lists of invitees on April 26, when Ambassador Jones returns to Brussels. Both sides also agreed to try to finalize on the 26th the dates for the conference, with Luxembourg preferring the week of June 27, and the U.S. favoring June 22. End Summary.

2. (C) On April 21, Senior Advisor and Coordinator for Iraq Policy Ambassador Richard Jones held a series of meetings with EU officials to coordinate planning for the US-EU co-hosted international conference on Iraq in June. Ambassador Jones briefed the EU's 25 Ambassadors of the Political and Security Committee, met with Commission Deputy DG Michael Leigh and Middle East Director Christian Leffler, conducted a joint meeting with the Luxembourg EU Presidency, the Commission and the Council Secretariat, and met with resident Iraqi Ambassador al-Doreky. Ambassador Jones was accompanied by Assistant Matt Fuller, EUR/ERA Deputy Director Karen Volker and USEU staff.

Briefing PSC Ambassadors on Iraq

3. (C) Jones opened by thanking the PSC for inviting him to speak, provided a brief summary of his background on Iraq and his mandate from Secretary Rice to maintain the political momentum created by the January 30 elections in Iraq. He explained the sequential process under way in forming an Iraqi government, noting that although it was time-consuming, this was both inevitable and, in the long run, desirable given the many domestic coalitions and interests with a political stake in Iraq's future. He laid out the political transition timeline as set out in the TAL: drafting the constitution by August 15, holding a referendum on it by October 15, and holding new elections under the new constitution by December 15, with a new government in place by the end of the year.

4. (C) Questions from PSC Ambassadors included an Austrian inquiry on plans for the US-EU conference on Iraq (Jones demurred, noting he would be meeting later in the day with the Presidency, Council and Commission to discuss this); a Polish appeal for the UN to have a key role in the conference; a request from Hungary on the regional implications of a Shiite majority government in Iraq; a question from Italy on Sunni attitudes on the government now being formed; a Spanish concern about prospects for building civil society, and an Irish question on Iran's role in Iraq. PSC Ambassadors appreciated Ambassador Jones' detailed responses, and Council Secretariat officials told USEU afterwards that they thought it was a very successful presentation and PSC Ambassadors were quite pleased.

Commission: Michael Leigh and Christian Leffler

5. (C) Ambassador Jones outlined U.S. thinking on the conference, noting that the goal is to send a clear political signal to the Iraqi people, their new government, and the insurgents that the international community is united behind an inclusive, democratic transition in Iraq. The U.S. was thinking the conference could be organized along the lines of UNSCR 1546, which focused on the political transition, economic reconstruction, and rule of law. On participation, the 50-60 countries would be credible, but the U.S. also wanted representation from all the major regions -- Europe, Asia, L.America, N. Africa, Sub-Saharan Africa, out of region Muslim states, etc.

6. (C) Leigh replied that the EC saw the conference "pretty much eye to eye," and also wants to send the political signal of support for the transition, the new government and the constitutional drafting process. He noted the EC's

particular interest in institution building, rule of law, and reconstruction. He thought the concept of a small group of conference planners, much like the Core Group which had worked well for donor coordination, would facilitate planning. He agreed with the themes described by Ambassador Jones. He asked about U.S. thinking on participants, noting the importance of inviting "meaningful" participants. The EC, he said, did not think "universality" of participation was necessary. (Note: In subsequent meetings, USEU saw briefly an EC list that totaled 60-62 invitees. End Note.)

17. (C) Leffler said the EC did not want this to be a pledging conference like Madrid; rather the need was to get pledges made at Madrid implemented. He agreed that debt rescheduling could be a good focus of the June conference. He thought it was important to use the conference to integrate Iraq in the international and regional community, and that we should press countries in the region to develop economic links to Iraq. On the political side, Leffler said the EC wants the UN to have a prominent role, as a way "to kick it into gear" in Iraq. Iraq desk officer Patricia Llombart noted that some member states want the conference to promote Iraqi reconciliation.

Luxembourg/Commission/Council

18. (C) Luxembourg PolDir Sylvie Lucas chaired the 2 1/2 hour session devoted to conference planning. The basic notion agreed is for a one-day ministerial, but with Senior Officials meeting the day before, and a Small Group dinner the evening before. A Press Conference will follow at the end of the ministerial, with a Communique to be adopted. A notional schedule for the conference was also discussed (see para 12 below.) Other major issues discussed included:

--DATES: Lucas said June 22 was somewhat problematic, as Luxembourg is scheduled to make a report to the European Parliament on its Presidency that day. She proposed June 28/29 or 26/27, but indicated Luxembourg could accept the June 21/22 if necessary. (Note. In a subsequent conversation with the Commission April 22, USEU was told the Commission favors June 22. End Note.)

--PARTICIPANTS: The EU side anticipates inviting about 60 countries and international organizations. Their thinking is to invite Iraq, EU 25, Iraq's neighbors, P-5, G-8, Core Group members, UN, Arab League, OIC, and IFI's (WB, IMF). Ambassador Jones urged consideration be given to including representative countries from other regions, and not to turn down any country that expressed interest in attending. He also mentioned the Coalition, NATO members, AU, OAS and ASEAN as potential invitees. The sides agreed to each prepare lists of proposed invitees and compare them on April 26th, when Ambassador Jones returns to Brussels and will have a working dinner with the EU. The EC offered to issue invitations, and suggested using the model of those issued for the Madrid donors' conference -- once Iraq has a government and has officially requested the conference.

--VENUE: On April 22, the Commission confirmed to USEU that the conference will be held in the Justus Lipsius building in Brussels, which is run by the Council Secretariat. This is good news, in that it allows the Commission to focus on substance, letting the Council deal with the mechanics of the venue.

--SMALL GROUP: The US and EU agreed on small group composition as follows:

US  
EU (Luxembourg Presidency, Commission, Council)  
Iraq (likely to be FM Zebari)  
Japan (US agreed to contact Japan and obtain POC name)  
Egypt (Ambassador Jones provided name of POC)  
UN (EC will contact NY for name of POC)

--PREPARATORY MEETING: Lucas told Ambassador Jones the EU preferred handling conference planning via Small Group conference calls, in order to avoid having to organize a face-face preparatory meeting (e.g. in Cairo). Jones agreed to begin with conference calls, but kept open the possibility that a face-to-face meeting might be needed. The EU agreed to this.

--DEBT RELIEF: Lucas said the EU supports having debt relief as one focus of the conference (especially regarding pressing Gulf states to make positive statements).

Commissioner Ferrero-Waldner's Chef du Cabinet

19. (C) Patrick Child, the Chef du Cabinet for Ferrero-Waldner urgently sought a brief meeting with Ambassador Jones, which took place after the meeting with Lucas. Child wanted to express Ferrero-Waldner's strong support and commitment to a successful conference. Ambassador Jones briefed Child on his earlier discussions,

and U.S. thinking about how to organize the conference. Child agreed with the framework proposed by Ambassador Jones and pledged full Commission support.

#### Meeting with Iraqi Ambassador al-Doreky

110. (C) Ambassador Jones briefed al-Doreky on U.S. thinking about the conference and his consultations with the EU earlier in the day. Al-Doreky said he had earlier in the week discussed this with FM Zebari, who expressed strong support for the conference. Al-Doreky noted the importance Iraq placed on ensuring Egyptian buy-in and strongly supported a preparatory Core Group meeting be held in Cairo in advance of the Conference. Ambassador Jones noted EU hesitation on this point, and urged al-Doreky to raise the matter directly with the EU. Al-Doreky said he would be meeting with Commissioner Ferrero-Waldner on April 25 and would do so. He added that he thought Baghdad was focusing on the conference, and would issue the formal request for it "within days" of the formation of a government.

#### Notional Proposal for the Conference on Iraq

112. (SBU) As generally discussed in the meeting with Luxembourg PolDir Lucas, here follows a notional schedule for the conference.

#### Day 1 - Pre-Ministerial

##### 1I. Senior Officials Discussion Groups w/Iraqi Delegation

- Political Transition (Constitution, elections)
- Security/Rule of Law/Judicial Reform
- Economic Reconstruction/Job Creation

II. Small Group Dinner: US, EU (EC, Luxembourg, Commission), Egypt, Japan, UN, Iraq

#### Day 2 - Ministerial Conference

0915-1015 Opening Plenary: Brief Co-Chair (US and Luxembourg) Statements, invite Iraq delegation to present vision and priorities for 2005

1015-1130 Theme: Political Transition, co-chaired by UN (perhaps UNSYG Annan), and another country, TBD, inviting Iraqi delegation (perhaps from Parliament) to make a presentation.

1130-1245 Theme: Economic Reconstruction, co-chaired by European Commission (Commissioner Benita Ferrero-Waldner) and another country, e.g. Japan, inviting Iraqi delegation (e.g. Min Planning) to make a presentation.

1300-1445 Lunch: Informal FM discussions of above themes; e.g. three or more separate tables, each focused on a theme, and each with US, EU and Iraqi participants. Exact number of themes/tables dependent on composition of Iraqi delegation.

1500-1615 Theme: Security/Rule of Law, co-chaired by EU Council (Solana) and another country, perhaps Egypt

1615-1700 Closing Plenary, adoption of Communique

1700 Press Conference (Secretary Rice, Iraqi FM, Luxembourg FM Asselborn, EU HighRep Solana, EC Commissioner Ferrero-Waldner)

End Text.

113. (U) Baghdad minimize considered.

114. (U) This cable was cleared by Ambassador Jones.

MCKINLEY

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